



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 154

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2008

No. 105

## House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. BERKLEY).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
June 24, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable SHELLEY BERKLEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 25 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 9:50 a.m.

### THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, today, the House will take up an extension of the Federal Aviation Administration's authorization. Unfortunately, this bill is more than it seems. It contains an \$8 billion bailout for the Highway Trust Fund. Now, for years, we've known that the Highway Trust Fund didn't have sufficient money, that it was losing its purchasing power. In fact, that was a concern going into the 2005 high-

way bill reauthorization. But what did we do?

We not only took no action to shore it up or to do things differently; we approved more than three times as many earmarks as there were in the last highway reauthorization. So now, here we are 3 years later, about a year before our next reauthorization, and we're out of money to cover the projects that we've authorized.

Now, I would submit that the action contained in this bill is the most irresponsible thing we can do. We're transferring \$8 billion from the general fund into the Highway Trust Fund. As we've known, as we've seen, when Members have the ability to earmark funds from an account, they do so. We did so to the tune of tens of billions of dollars in the highway authorization bill the last time, including the bridge to nowhere and 6,300 other earmarks. If we move additional moneys from the general fund into the Highway Trust Fund, then Katy bar the door when it comes to spending. We simply cannot keep a lid on it.

I'm just wondering: When are we going to take up the tough choices? It seems like every time we come to a point when we simply don't have money in the account we simply increase the deficit more and more. We're finding the easy way out. There are options available to us. I will offer amendments wherever I can to take money from the earmarks that haven't been spent, money that we know is not priority spending, and shore up the Highway Trust Fund so that we don't have to move general fund moneys into this account. We simply can't do that. We can't start the process of taking general fund moneys and shoring up the Highway Trust Fund when we know that we can't control our spending appetite when it comes to earmarks. I urge my colleagues to oppose this irresponsible bailout.

Another thing that is objectionable: We're doing this on the suspension cal-

endar. That's my understanding today. The suspension calendar is meant as a vehicle to name post offices or to honor sports teams or to do things that are noncontroversial. Yet here we're transferring \$8 billion from the general fund to bail out the Highway Trust Fund. Under rules of suspension, that simply doesn't seem right. That is not responsible legislating. It wouldn't be responsible if Republicans did it in the majority. It's not responsible when Democrats do it.

I urge my colleagues to oppose it. Let's find time to actually take a stand for the taxpayers and say enough is enough. We cannot continue to spend money this way.

### IMPROVING FEDERAL FLOOD DISASTER POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, like the proverbial pig that has been swallowed by the python, the swollen surge of the Mississippi flood waters is slowly working its way down the river. The damage inflicted is not just to the homes, businesses and farms along the way, but it will have serious consequences for the environment at the mouth of the Mississippi, the so-called "dead zone"—further erosion of topsoil along the length of the river while raising food prices across America and around the world.

The consensus of the scientific community is that extreme weather events like the heavy rainfalls are going to make episodes like this more frequent, but even if you do not agree with the scientific consensus, one thing is beyond dispute: The policies and practices of the Federal Government and of our State and local partners are not just contributing to the disaster but are themselves a disaster.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H5867